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SIXTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
New York, 25 August-3 September 1992
Item 6 (e) of the provisional agenda*

TOPONYMIC DATA FILES: NATIONAL GAZETTEERS

Report on the gazetteer program of the United States of America

Paper submitted by the United States of America**

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* E/CONF.85/1/Rev.1.

** Prepared by Roger L. Payne, United States Geological Survey.

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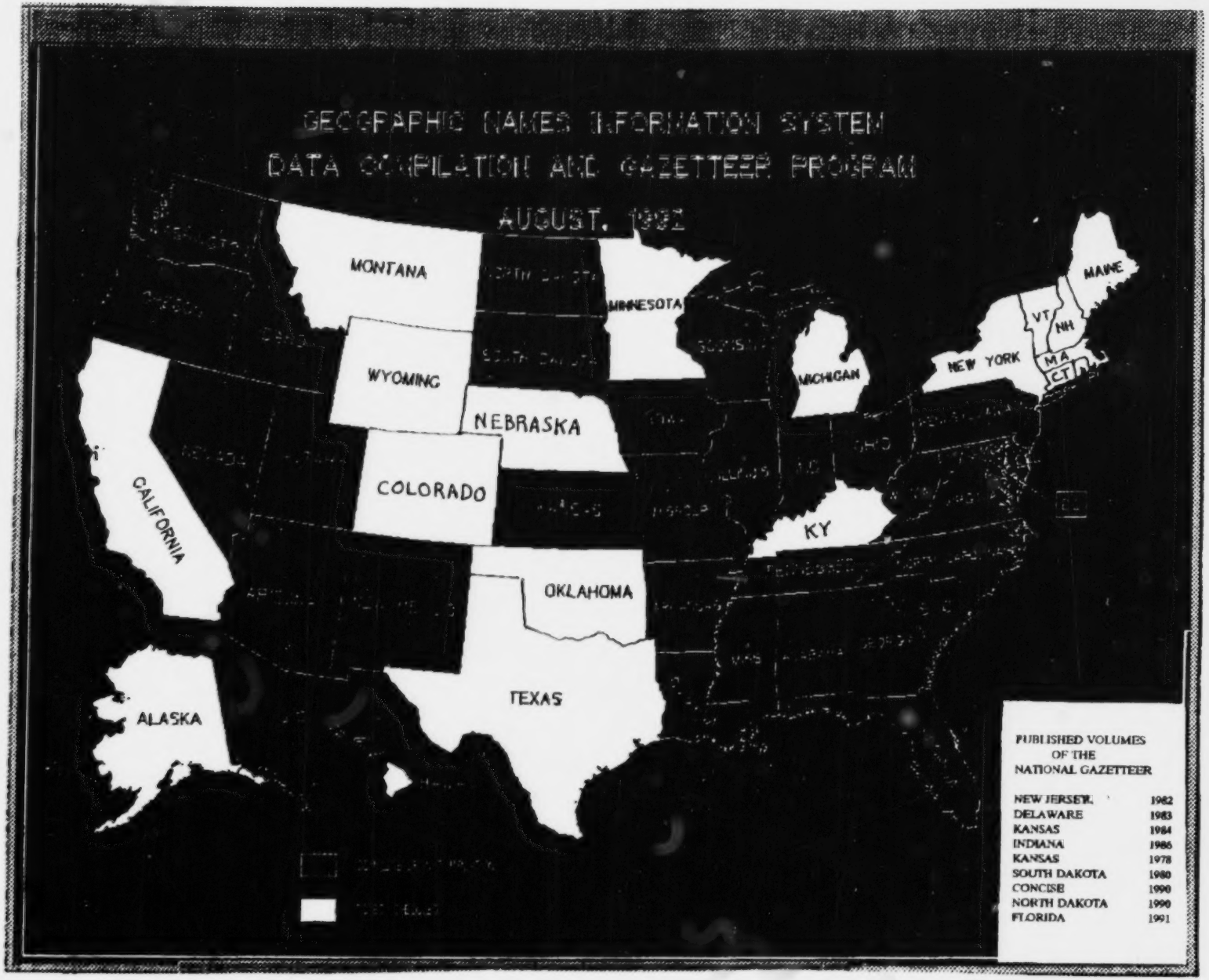
1. The National Gazetteer of the United States of America is being published as United States Geological Survey Professional Paper 1200 with each state, territory and outlying area to be published as a separate volume. The National Gazetteer is a product of the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS). Data compilation for the national Geographic Names Data Base, the primary component of GNIS, is accomplished in two phases. Phase I, begun in 1976 and completed in 1981, entailed the collecting and recording of most names and associated information from the large-scale topographic maps published by the Geological Survey, and the records of the United States Board on Geographic Names. Approximately 2 million feature names and variant names were recorded and processed into the national Geographic Names Data Base.

2. Phase II, the compilation and collection of names and associated information from other sources, was begun in 1982. The projected completion date is 1998-2002. Research and compilation in this phase is more comprehensive and therefore more time consuming. Instructions detailing the methodology for researching, compiling, and encoding names and associated information are provided in Geological Survey Circular 1011 (Orth and Payne, 1987). Checks and balances are built into the methodology as well as in the GNIS data input software to ensure adherence to the principles and policies of the Board on Geographic Names. Quality and detail are paramount in this effort; therefore, the assistance of local experts and interested organizations is solicited for compiling data for each state. Depending upon the particulars of a state, the compilation effort requires approximately three to three and one half years and about sixth months processing time before a state gazetteer is published. The concise (abridged) volume of the National Gazetteer was published in October 1990. The attached map provides the status of Phase II compilation for the various states.


GEOGRAPHIC NAMES INFORMATION SYSTEM
DATA COMPILATION AND GAZETTEER PROGRAM
AUGUST, 1991
MONTANA
WYOMING
NEBRASKA
COLORADO
CALIFORNIA
OKLAHOMA
TEXAS
ALASKA
MINNESOTA
MICHIGAN
NEW YORK
MAINE
VT
NH
MA
CT
OHIO
KY
PUBLISHED VOLUMES
OF THE
NATIONAL GAZETTEER
NEW JERSEY 1982
DELAWARE 1983
KANSAS 1984
INDIANA 1986
KANSAS 1978
SOUTH DAKOTA 1980
CONCISE 1990
NORTH DAKOTA 1990
FLORIDA 1991

The National Gazetteer

"The National Gazetteer of the United States of America" is a compendium of placenames that identifies and describes manufactured and natural features in the United States. Seven State volumes and a concise volume covering the Nation have been published by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) as Professional Paper 1200. The published volumes are the most comprehensive gazetteers available for their respective States. The United States Concise Gazetteer, published in 1990, is a select list of geographic names for major places, features, and areas in the United States and its territories based on the USGS National Atlas. Gazetteer information is drawn from USGS topographic maps, other Federal and State materials, and from all available historical maps. Variant spellings of names are included, making the gazetteers a reference tool for historians, linguists, journalists, and genealogists, as well as cartographers.

Each name, whether of a manufactured feature such as a school, town, reservoir, or cemetery, or of a natural feature such as a stream, valley, or mountain, is listed alphabetically. Each entry includes the type of feature, the status of the name as determined by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names, the name of the county in which the feature is located, the latitude and longitude, the elevation—where available, and the name of the USGS topographic map that shows the feature.

The National Gazetteer is a product of the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS). GNIS is being compiled in two phases. The first phase is complete for all States and areas under U.S. jurisdiction and includes most of the feature names found on the 1:24,000-scale maps published by the U.S. Geological Survey. The second phase involves the collection of current and historical names from other sources such as the National Ocean Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Federal Communications Commission, and official State publications and local materials. A State gazetteer is published when Phase II information is complete, but an interim gazetteer is available earlier in the form of bound computer listings, magnetic tapes, and microfiche.

Standard bound listing prices are shown below. Tape costs range upward from $40, depending on the information desired. Microfiche files for States cost $2 each. Customized searches of the data are individually priced and can be conducted at any of the USGS's Earth Science Information Centers (ESIC's), and the results can be requested as bound listings or on magnetic tape.

To get ordering information for National Gazetteer products, contact any ESIC or call 1-800-USA-MAPS.

Questions about the National Gazetteer should be directed to the Chief, Branch of Geographic Names, U.S. Geological Survey, 523 National Center, Reston, VA 22092.

A factsheet describing the GNIS is also available.

Prices for Interim Listings

Alabama*	$29
Alaska	29
American Samoa	34
Arkansas**	29
California	34
Colorado	29
Connecticut	5
District of Columbia*	5
Florida*	29
Georgia	29
Guam	34
Hawaii	34
Idaho**	29
Illinois	29
Iowa**	18
Kentucky	29
Louisiana**	29
Maine	29
Maryland	18
Massachusetts	18
Michigan	34
Micronesia	34
Minnesota	34
Mississippi*	34
Missouri*	34
Montana	29
Nebraska**	18
Nevada*	34
New Hampshire	5
New Mexico**	34
New York	$29
North Carolina**	34
Ohio**	34
Oklahoma	18
Oregon**	29
Pennsylvania*	34
Puerto Rico	34
Rhode Island	5
South Carolina	34
Tennessee*	34
Texas	34
Utah*	29
Vermont	5
Virginia	29
Virgin Islands	34
Washington**	29
West Virginia	29
Wisconsin	29
Wyoming**	29

*Phase II is complete.
**Contains some Phase II information.

Published Gazetteers

Arizona (1986)	$31
Delaware (1983)	4.75
Indiana (1988)	29
Kansas (1985)	16
New Jersey (1982, minor rev. 1983)	7
North Dakota (1990)	10
South Dakota (1989)	14
Concise (1990)	29